

LIVEWELL NURSING

Nurses Empowering Clients: Fostering Self-Sufficiency and Independence Across the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency

By: Angela Mitchell, CNO



In the field of healthcare, nurses play a vital role in empowering their clients to achieve self-sufficiency and independence. This essential aspect of nursing care is particularly crucial in the healthcare settings we see in our agency such as behavioral health, long-term care, and public health. By providing support, education, and encouragement, nurses can profoundly impact the lives of their clients and help them lead more fulfilling and autonomous lives.

At our County of San Diego Psychiatric hospital and outpatient behavioral health, nurses are instrumental in assisting individuals with mental health challenges to develop coping mechanisms and life skills that promote independence. By offering therapeutic interventions, counseling, and support, our nurses help clients learn to manage their conditions effectively and navigate their daily lives with increased self-reliance. For example, in a recent study by Jones and Smith (2021), psychiatric nurses were found to be crucial in empowering patients with schizophrenia to improve their self-care habits and enhance their overall quality of life.

At Edgemoor, nurses play a pivotal role in promoting the independence and well-being of residents. Through personalized care plans, rehabilitation programs, and assistance with activities of daily living, our nurses help residents maintain their functional abilities and autonomy to the greatest extent possible. By fostering a supportive environment that encourages self-care and decision-making, nurses empower residents to lead fulfilling lives despite the challenges they may face. Research by Brown et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of nursing interventions in enhancing the quality of life and independence of older adults in long-term care settings.

In public health initiatives, nurses are at the forefront of promoting self-sufficiency and independence among individuals and communities. Through health education, preventive care, and advocacy, nurses empower individuals to take control of their health and make informed decisions about their well-being. By addressing social determinants of health and promoting health literacy, nurses contribute to the overall empowerment and autonomy of those they serve. Evidence-based home visiting programs such as Healthy Families America (HFA) play a crucial role in promoting independence among families by providing targeted support, resources, and education to enhance parenting skills and family functioning. HFA is a nationally recognized home visiting program designed to prevent child abuse and neglect, promote child development, and strengthen parent-child relationships (Healthy Families America, n.d.). By offering evidence-based interventions and support services, HFA empowers families to build upon their strengths, address challenges, and cultivate a nurturing environment that fosters independence and self-sufficiency.

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HFA promotes independence by equipping parents with the knowledge and skills needed to create a safe and supportive home environment for their children. Through home visits, parenting education, and referrals to community resources, HFA empowers parents to make informed decisions, set goals, and take proactive steps to meet the needs of their families. By enhancing parental capacity and resilience, HFA helps families develop the confidence and abilities necessary to overcome adversity and thrive independently. In a study by Johnson et al. (2022), the effectiveness of the Healthy Families program was demonstrated in promoting positive parenting practices, improving child outcomes, and enhancing family well-being. The researchers found that participation in HFA was associated with increased parental self-efficacy, reduced parenting stress, and improved parent-child interactions, all of which are essential factors in fostering independence and resilience within families. By implementing evidence-based practices grounded in research and best practices, programs like Healthy Families America contribute significantly to the promotion of independence among families. Through tailored interventions, ongoing support, and a strengths-based approach, HFA empowers families to build upon their strengths, address challenges, and create a nurturing environment where children can thrive, and families can flourish.

A recent report by the World Health Organization (2023) emphasized the critical role of nurses in promoting health equity and self-sufficiency in diverse populations. Overall, our roles as nurses in supporting self-sufficiency and independence in healthcare cannot be overstated. Through dedication, expertise, and compassion, we empower our clients to overcome challenges, achieve their goals, and live more autonomous lives. By recognizing the unique needs and strengths of everyone, we can make a lasting impact on the well-being and quality of life of those we care for across our county. Live Well.

References

Brown, A., et al. (2020). Enhancing independence and quality of life in long-term care: The role of nursing interventions. *Journal of Nursing Care*, 15(2), 45-58.

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SUBMISSIONS

Please e-mail submission (ideas, photos, articles, trainings, dates, accolades, local or national news, etc.) to Araceli.Casas@sdcounty.ca.gov and Susan.Callies@sdcounty.ca.gov

For consideration in next issue, please submit entries by close of business on August 16, 2024. Submission limits: 125-275 words

August Topic: *Immunizations*



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Honoring Independent Decision-Making

Adult Protective Services, Staff Nurse, Kathleen Sorahan, RN

In the sunny month of July when we celebrate our nation's hard-won independence, we think of independence as an exciting American right and tradition. But what about when this right allows people to make unhealthy or even unsafe choices?

The Code of Ethics for Nurses states that "Patients have the moral and legal right to determine what will be done with and to their person" (American Nurses Association). One of the biggest challenges we face is how to honor the person's right to independence even when we disagree and see looming risks. Our adult clients have rights to their own decision-making and in most instances, we cannot just step into a situation and choose what we may see as a safer option for them.

One way we support our clients even when we disagree with their decisions is to focus on the relationship. By developing a respectful rapport, we create a climate where the client may trust our assistance to make healthier choices in the future. We also provide information and resources for their consideration now or at a later moment when they might be more receptive to options.

As nurses, we also need to reconcile our own feelings when clients make unhealthy choices. We recognize they are adults who may have reasons we do not know or understand but that are important to them and deserve our respect. As we celebrate our nation's Independence Day take a moment to remember and value each person's right to autonomous decision-making. Use your "nursing know-how" to establish a warm rapport and offer safe and healthy options for your client as you support them to make their own independent decisions.



References

American Nurses Association (2015) Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements. <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

Graduation Announcement!!!

By: Angela Mitchell, CNO

We are pleased to announce the graduation of Rosemarie (Rose) Ang from the prestigious Leaders in Action (LIA) program. LIA was established in 2004, as a leadership succession plan for Southern Area Consortium of Human Services (SACHS) Counties. It is a partnership between SACHS, San Diego State University, and the Academy for Professional Excellence. LIA incorporates evidence-based approaches to succession planning and executive development in a way that is tailored to the needs of the SACHS counties. The program's goal is to create a critical mass of highly competent executives in the Southern California region ready for tomorrow's county leadership opportunities and challenges. Rose successfully completed the program on May 17, 2024, marking a significant milestone in her professional development.

Serving in various nursing leadership roles in the department of Medical Care Services, Rose has demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities and a strong commitment to serving her community. Throughout her participation in the LIA program, she engaged in 15 days of executive training, received valuable feedback through a 360 assessment, and worked on enhancing her leadership style through a leadership temperament survey.

We commend Rose for her dedication, hard work, and passion for making a positive impact in the field of public health and nursing. Her successful completion of the LIA program underscores her commitment to personal and professional growth.

Please join us in congratulating Rosemarie Ang on this significant achievement and wishing her continued success in her career as a dynamic and effective leader. Congratulations, Rose!



Bottom Row Left to Right: Sarah Glass, Rosa Gracian, Rosemarie Ang, Alex Khan

Top Row Left to Right: Alfredo Guardado, Kimberly Giardina, Angela Mitchell

We Have A Voice

By Imee Karty, PHN Supervisor, Office of Nursing Excellence



“As a nurse, we have the opportunity to heal the mind, soul, heart, and body of our patients, their families, and ourselves. They may forget your name, but they will never forget how you made them feel.” – Maya Angelou

The freedom to decide how we motivate ourselves and interact with our clients is powerful. In nursing we have many opportunities to be motivated and to make an impact while remaining within the scope of nursing practice. We have a voice and one of the delegations we can be a part of and make a difference is through shared governance. Let's encourage each other to discuss shared interests and responsibilities and engage in mutual decision-making that will benefit ourselves, our departments, and the clients we serve. I believe that if we have ownership, responsibility, and independence in the work we do, we are more motivated to deliver great, positive, and long-lasting outcomes.

A cross-sectional survey study related to shared governance, autonomy, magnet status, nurse-sensitive indicators, and nurse satisfaction published in the Journal of Nursing Care Quality, articulated that nurses' autonomy and shared governance along with leadership support were significant predictors of nurse satisfaction and key strategies to improve outcomes. Nursing is a challenging profession and I hope we all take part in using our voices and independence to continue to make meaningful impact to our careers and lives we touch.

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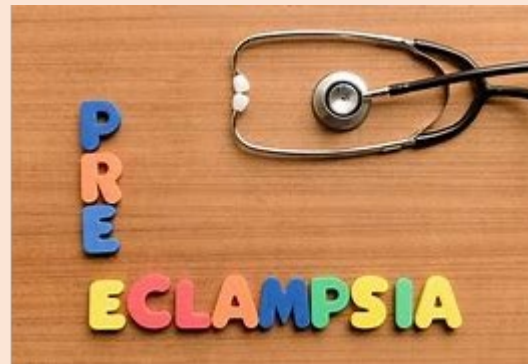
Fostering Client Empowerment: Promoting Self-Reliance and Autonomy in Healthcare

By: Amaya Ly, Manager of Public Health Nursing

At the North Coastal Public Health Center, a Shared Governance initiative launched on January 1, 2024, focused on empowering our antepartum clients enrolled in the home visiting program to monitor their blood pressure levels. The goal was to familiarize them with their blood pressure readings and equip them to continue monitoring their blood pressure at home for ten days following their discharge from the hospital. Studies have revealed that as many as 10% of maternal fatalities in the postpartum period are linked to hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. Blood pressure typically peaks between three and six days after childbirth, with 5.7% of cases of preeclampsia or eclampsia manifesting during this time (Chang, Tsai, Hsu, et al., 2023).

Evidence suggests that self-management support yields positive outcomes by enhancing patients' understanding of hypertension, boosting adherence to hypertension treatment, fostering effective self-care practices, and achieving improved blood pressure regulation among individuals diagnosed with hypertension ("The Effect of Self-Management Support," 2022). To support our clients, Public Health Nurses (PHNs) provided automatic blood pressure monitors on loan, delivered written educational materials in both English and Spanish on blood pressure categories and proper measurement techniques as per the American Heart Association guidelines, and distributed a log for clients to monitor their blood pressure trends. Clients were educated on when to contact their healthcare provider or seek emergency assistance. At the conclusion of the ten-day monitoring period, clients sent a photo of their log to the PHN for data analysis and further guidance.

One of our PHNs, Jessica Watson, engaged clients in this initiative. One participant was a 41-year-old woman, gravida 1 para 1, diagnosed with gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM), bipolar depression, and a history of substance abuse. She is married and has maintained sobriety for two years. Through this project, the client successfully identified her elevated blood pressure levels. Please see the timeline below outlining the sequence of events:



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Fostering Client Empowerment: Promoting Self-Reliance and Autonomy in Healthcare

By: Amaya Ly, Manager of Public Health Nursing

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April 26, 2024: A blood pressure cuff was provided during the 36-week visit. The client's blood pressure reading at the visit was 131/89. The client was not aware of her typical blood pressure history. The Public Health Nurse (PHN) provided education on using the cuff, recognizing danger signs, and knowing when to seek emergency care.

April 30, 2024: The client messaged the PHN reporting a blood pressure reading of 144/87. She also experienced dizziness and nausea. The PHN advised the client to contact her obstetrician (OB). The OB instructed the client to go to Palomar Hospital. Subsequently, the client was hospitalized due to pre-eclampsia and was induced. She underwent a cesarean section on May 3, 2024.

May 6, 2024: Around 11 PM on May 7, 2024, the client woke up with shortness of breath and a blood pressure reading of 140/90. She returned to the emergency department and was admitted for another night to stabilize her blood pressure and receive medication.

May 9, 2024: The client has returned home and has been consistently monitoring her blood pressure. Her readings have progressively decreased from 143/93 to 124/80. She monitors her blood pressure daily, shares the results with her doctor, and has been prescribed Labetalol for 30 days.

During this month's focus on independence, encouraging clients to play an active role in their healthcare can enhance their engagement and motivation to adhere to treatment plans. Taking an active part in managing their health allows them to be more self-reliant and empowered to control their well-being, as evidenced by the client's experience detailed above. We greatly appreciate the positive progress made by this client and will continue to provide education to all our clients.

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